

Video Tape Confessions Predicted

OCEAN CITY, Md., Aug. 20 (AP)—Attorney General Thomas B. Finan predicted last night that within 20 years interrogations of criminal suspects will be video-taped for use in trials.

In an address before the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association convention, Finan said such tapes probably would be accompanied by a written transcription signed by the accused.

The State's top legal officer said the role of the confession in criminal prosecution will be reduced almost to a mere reference document because of the insistence by courts for stricter adherence to rules of interrogation.

With video tape, Finan said, "the court and the jury could review the audio film and see and hear the actual interrogation at the time the confession was forthcoming.

"The court and the jury would see for themselves the condition in which the accused was when he made the confession and under what circumstances it was given; that is whether there appeared to be coercion, inducement or physical mistreatment present."

Finan said perhaps when such a technique is perfected, "we will again see the confession play a more dominant role in the criminal trial."